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## *Our Saviour's Example.*

An unbeliever once said to Dr. Paley, that if God had given a revelation, he would have written it in the skies. The remark was as unphilosophical as it was untrue in fact. It overlooked human nature, and the way by which man is influenced. The reason which the doubter would have probably given why a revelation should be written in the skies, would have been that all men in all countries would thus be able to see it, to read, and to have it standing ever before them. But this mode of making all men accept revelation would, to say nothing of other considerations, be the one to lead all men to neglect it—reject it. If man were endowed with intellect alone, the scheme might be effectual; it would then matter little whence religion came, provided it only came. The truth would be equally quick and powerful whether it were traced in blazing characters along the overarching sky, or painted on the leaves of the forest, or muttered in the rippling brook, or sounded abroad by the thunder. To know would be to accept it. There would be no unbelievers, and no virtue in being a believer. No room would exist to exercise belief or unbelief. All would know with mathematical certainty what was revealed, and all would be placed under an inevitable, uncontrollable constraint to receive it. But our nature is not thus one-sided and unbalanced. We have the capacity of feeling and choosing as well as thinking. A will and the affections are united with the intellect. And we wanted not a cold revelation inscribed on the sky, but one of living warmth, uttered from living lips, gushing up from a heart like our hearts, and acted out in a tempted, sorrow-stricken, yet hopeful life, such as we live. Such a revelation

we have. And in the manner by which God addressed it to us we see abundant proof that the same Being made the revelation who made us, and abundant cause to excite our gratitude that when the Almighty did reveal himself, it was with so much mercy and kindness. Jesus Christ was the revelation. Jesus Christ, as he lived and laboured, taught and suffered, was crucified and rose again from the dead. The truth was not an abstraction,—distant, speculative, lifeless,—but embodied in a living soul, which bore all the infirmities we bear, was "in all points tempted as we are," and which, after passing through a life of unexampled hardship and suffering, came out of the fiery ordeal perfectly unstained, victorious over sin, and victorious over the grave. Jesus did all this, and he did it through the power of that very truth which he was sent to preach to us. Thus he was a perfect Mediator, or Interposer, between God and man. He possessed all the truth which God wished to communicate to man on the one hand, and on the other he was a man, and could therefore be sympathized with by other men, in all the trials and sorrows he was obliged to undergo in promulgating that truth.

When we consider, therefore, that he is our pattern in all things, and that he taught both by his actions and his precepts, we read the brief history of his life with an eager curiosity to see how he acted upon different occasions, and treated different persons; whether he was really perfect, whether there may not have been some unguarded moment in his sublime career, when he took an unguarded step and sinned. And when one has read through the artless story from end to end, and seen that there was *no* unguarded moment, not one in all that eventful, and distracted, and persecuted life, how can he fail to bow down before the Saviour, and acknowledge that he was the manifestation of the Infinite God!

The history which the Evangelists give of Christ is short. A great many actions and lessons are omitted. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John xxi. 25.) The imagination, accordingly, when under the proper restraints, is able to draw a just, as well as large picture from what is said in very few words. Some short sentences, looked at in this way, become full of significance and power. Such are those which mention the fact of little children being brought to Jesus and kindly treated, and blessed by him. The ministry of Jesus was now drawing to a close.

He has left Galilee for the last time. He is soon to offer himself up for the redemption of the world. While the dark prospect of an ignominious and cruel death is shutting around him, and the great object of his life is filling his mind with a grander and grander interest, as he approaches its accomplishment, he has nevertheless time to do every duty, great and small, to bear patiently with his disciples in their mistakes and prejudices, to work miracles, to travel from place to place, to preach to assembled multitudes. Yes; the Saviour of the world, at the most active period of his intensely active ministry, when everything was wound up to the highest pitch, and we may suppose his mind dwelt much on that solemn and mysterious tragedy soon to be enacted, finds time to show that affectionate interest in little children, and to pay them those kind attentions, which even the good are every day seen to neglect and disregard almost without being conscious that they are not doing what is perfectly right. Mark the scene. Jesus is healing the sick and dispensing the gospel of the kingdom to a vast multitude, collected to hear him in a place east of the river Jordan. Children are brought to him to have him lay his hands on them and bless them, showing at least the confidence of the parents that Jesus was a great and good man, however they might regard his claim to the Messiahship. The disciples are angry and repulse them. To them it seems an unreasonable intrusion. "Our master is engaged about more important matters than attending to little children. He has higher duties to perform than to play the fondler. Take the children away." How unlike Jesus! He directs a look of reproof at the disciples, calls back the children, frightened away by the harsh voices and angry expressions, speaks kindly to them, and then, as if touched with the tender recollections of his own sainted infancy, and the blessing which he had received in the arms of the venerable and holy Simeon, takes them up in his arms and blesses them! What a beautiful and affecting incident! How it must have endeared him to the parents of the children themselves! What a thrill of delight must have run through the hearts of the little ones to be so affectionately treated! And, as many a fond mother has bent over her child from that time downward, and thought of the Saviour's love for little children and his blessing upon them, how her own love to him has been animated! And when the blessed boon has been withdrawn, how consoling the reflection that the infant spirit has mounted on high to be with him forever who was so affectionate and kind to little children while

he was still on the earth! The world, as it sweeps on with its noise, and tumult, and selfishness, may lightly esteem this scene in the life of Jesus; but it teaches to every parent a lesson of most holy and precious truth, and hallows the relation he bears to his children with the Saviour's love. It is a scene to be remembered by every instructor of the young. It should go with the Sunday-school teacher, and animate him in all his duties. And, while engaged in providing for and instructing the young, both parent and teacher should remember that they will be paid over and over again for all they do, if they transfer to their own hearts and characters that innocence and simplicity, upon which Jesus pronounced his blessing. L.

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## *Letters to Unbelievers.*

### No. VI.

#### RELIGIOUS BELIEF OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

YOU perceive that he calls the Hebrew records the most faithful of all histories. This is all the merit the authors themselves ever claimed, in relation to a large portion of the Old Testament.

Dr. Franklin considered ridiculing the Scriptures a species of profaneness. He used the following language respecting one Dr. Brown, whom he met with on his journey to Philadelphia.

"He had some letters, and was ingenious, but he was an infidel, and *wickedly* undertook, some years after, to turn the Bible into doggerel verse. By this means he set many *facts* in a ridiculous light, and might have done mischief with *weak minds*, if his work had been published; but it never was."—*Life*, p. 18.

"About the year 1734, there arrived among us a young Presbyterian preacher, named Hemphill, who delivered with a good voice, and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses, which drew together considerable numbers of different persuasions, who joined in admiring him. Among the rest, I became one of his constant hearers, his sermons pleasing me, as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the practice of virtue, or what in the religious style are called good works.

Those however of our congregation who considered themselves as Orthodox Presbyterians, disapproved his doctrine, and were joined by most of the old ministers, who arraigned him of heterodoxy before the Synod, in order to have him silenced. I became his zealous partisan, and contributed all I could to raise a party in his favour, and combatted for him awhile with some hopes of success.

"During the contest an unlucky occurrence hurt his cause exceedingly. One of our adversaries having heard him preach a sermon that was much admired, thought he had somewhere read the sermon before, or at least a part of it. On searching he found that part quoted at length in one of the British Reviews, from a discourse of Dr. Foster's. This detection gave many of our party disgust, who accordingly abandoned his cause, and occasioned our more speedy discomfiture in the Synod. I stuck by him however. I rather approved his giving us good sermons composed by others, than bad ones of his own manufacture; though the latter was the practice of our common teachers. He afterwards acknowledged to me that none of those he preached were his own; adding that his memory was such as enabled him to retain and repeat any sermon after once reading only. On our defeat he left us in search elsewhere of better fortune, and I quitted the congregation, never attending it after; though I continued many years my subscription for the support of its ministers."—*Life*, p. 79.

A most important fact is here disclosed. Benjamin Franklin was actually excluded from public worship by useless, uninteresting, unscriptural preaching.

Dr. Franklin's views of a future life were rational and scriptural. The following extracts from familiar letters will confirm my statement.

"I condole with you. We have lost a most dear and valuable relation. But it is the will of God and nature, that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life. This is rather an embryo state, a preparation for living. A man is not completely born until he be dead. Why then should we grieve, that a new child is born among the immortals, a new member added to their happy society? We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow-creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid become an encumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given, it is equally kind and benevolent, that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way. We ourselves, in some

cases, prudently choose a partial death. A mangled, painful limb, which cannot be restored, we willingly cut off. He who plucks out a tooth, parts with it freely, since the pain goes with it, and he who quits the whole body, parts at once with all pains and possibilities of pains and diseases, which it was liable to, or capable of making him suffer. Our friend and we were invited abroad on a party of pleasure, which is to last forever. His chair was ready first; and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him."—*Letters*, p. 39.

From several sentences which I have quoted, you perceive that Dr. Franklin firmly believed in future rewards and punishments.

Dr. Franklin entertained scriptural views on the subject of practical religion. To prove the truth of this assertion, I shall bring together several extracts on a variety of topics. He wished to have children educated in the belief and practice of the gospel. He drew up a plan for an English school in Philadelphia; and in this is contained the following recommendation of a religious book for the fourth class.

"Dr. Johnson's *Ethica*, or first principles of morality may now be read by the scholars, and explained by the master, to lay a solid foundation of *virtue* and *piety* in their minds."—*Works*, Vol. V. p. 171. English edition.

Now the book here recommended was published by the Rev. Samuel Johnson, President of King's College, New York; and it is designed to explain and defend natural and revealed religion. Would an unbeliever, especially would any of our modern unbelievers, introduce such a work among children and youth. One extract will confirm my statement.

"Having thus given a short sketch of the first principles of moral philosophy, or what is called the religion of nature, I shall now conclude by giving a very short summary of *revealed religion*, and show the connection between them and Christianity, or the religion of the Mediator, which is to be considered the great infallible means of our instruction and reformation, for begetting, improving, and perfecting in us all the virtues of an honest heart, and a good life, and for ascertaining to us the favour of God, and a blessed immortality, to which it is so admirably subservient, that *it should seem the greatest inconsistency imaginable for a man to be a real friend to what is called natural religion or morality, and at the same time not to adhere firmly to the Christian system.*"—*Ethica*, p. 91.

The firm belief of Dr. Franklin, that nothing but true religion can give us permanent happiness, is expressed in the following quotation.

"The passions, by being too much conversant with earthly objects, can never fix in us a proper composure and acquiescence of mind. Nothing but an indifference to the things of this world, an entire submission to the will of Providence here, and a well grounded expectation of happiness hereafter, can give us a true, satisfactory enjoyment of ourselves. Virtue is the best guard against the many unavoidable evils incident to us; nothing better alleviates the weight of the afflictions, or gives a truer relish of the blessings, of human life. Happiness springs immediately from the mind; wealth is but to be considered a candidate or circumstance, without which this happiness cannot be considered pure and unabated. There is no happiness then but in a virtuous and self-approving conduct. Unless our actions will bear the test of our sober judgments and reflections upon them, they are not the actions, and consequently not the happiness of, a rational being."—*Works*, Vol. V. pp. 94, 95. English edition.

"I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man;* for by his grace, through a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, Ben Franklin has wronged me. This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection."—*Works*, Vol. VI. p. 122.

"One's true happiness depends more upon one's own judgment of one's self, or a consciousness of rectitude in action and intention, and the approbation of those few who judge impartially, than upon the applause of the unthinking, undiscerning multitude, who are apt to cry *hosanna* to-day, and to-morrow, *crucify* him."—*Letters*, p. 99.

"In fine, nothing can contribute to true happiness, that is inconsistent with duty; nor can a course of action, conformable to it, be finally without an ample reward. For God governs, and he is *good*."—*Letters*, p. 116.

He is encouraging people in England to emigrate to this country; and he gives the following as one reason why this country would be a desirable residence.

"Serious religion, under its various denominations, is not only tolerated, but respected and practised. Atheism is unknown; infidelity rare and secret; so that persons may live to a great age in this country, without having their piety shocked by meeting with either an atheist or an infidel. And the Divine Being seems to have manifested his approbation of the mutual forbearance and kindness with which the different sects treat each

other, by the remarkable prosperity with which he has been pleased to favour the whole country."—*Works*, Vol. V. p. 421.

Such was the reverence of Dr. Franklin for the Christian.

Thomas Paine requested Dr. Franklin to examine the manuscript of his Age of Reason, and make criticisms upon the production. In answer the Doctor returned the following very important letter, which all unbelievers would do well to consider.

"I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with *some readers*, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and *no benefit* to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For amongst us it is not necessary as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*,

what would they be if *without it?* I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours."—*Works*, Vol. VI. pp. 243, 244.

Dr. Franklin had no fear of death. His last days were serene and cheerful. One or two extracts will confirm these statements.

"My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen during a long life a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can cheerfully, with filial confidence, resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour."—*Works*, Vol. VI. p. 183.

The following passages were written by the intimate friends and companions of Dr. Franklin. The first is the composition of a lady.

"I was the faithful witness of the closing scene, which he sustained with that calm fortitude which characterized him through life. No repining, no peevish expressions ever escaped him, during a confinement of two years, in which I believe, if every moment of ease could be added together, the sum would not amount to two whole months. When the pain was not too violent to be amused, he employed himself with his books, his pen, or in conversation with his friends; and upon every occasion, displayed the clearness of his intellects and the cheerfulness of his temper. Even when the intervals from pain were so short that his words were frequently interrupted, I have known him hold a discourse in a sublime strain of piety. It is natural for us to wish that an attention to some ceremonies had accompanied that religion of the heart which I am convinced Dr. Franklin always possessed; but let us who feel the benefit of them continue to practise them, without thinking lightly of that piety which could support pain without a murmur, and meet death without terror."—*Monthly Repository*, Vol. XVII. p. 4.

Read also the following extract.

"Yes, we have lost that valued, that venerable, kind friend, whose knowledge enlightened our minds, and whose philanthropy warmed our hearts; but we have the consolation to think, that if a life well spent in acts of universal benevolence to mankind, a grateful acknowledgment of Divine favour, a patient submission under severe chastisement, and an humble trust in Almighty mercy, can insure the happiness of a future state, our present loss is his gain."

The next extract is from a letter of Nicholas Collin to the grandson of Dr. Franklin.

"As I often had the satisfaction of conversing with that immortal sage, your grandsire, in his last illness, the following anecdotes may be of some use, as an additional testimony of facts to mankind. The Doctor had sublime and affecting sentiments of religion. He believed, that by the invariable laws of God in the moral world, all crimes are punished either here or hereafter; and that consequently an evil deed can never be profitable in any case whatever; he was equally persuaded that every good act has its reward. Under a painful disease he expressed a firm confidence, that all the sufferings of this life are but as the momentary pricking of a pin, in comparison to the total happiness of our existence. He rejoiced in a speedy approach to the regions of bliss and life eternal. He dwelt with rapture on the felicity of beholding the glorious Father of Spirits, whose essence is incomprehensible to the wisest mortals; of contemplating his works in the higher worlds; and of conversing there with good fellow-creatues from every part of the universe."—*Life*, p. 416.

Letter from Dr. Rush to Dr. Price.

"Dear Sir,

The papers will inform you of the death of our late illustrious friend, Dr. Franklin. The evening of his life was marked by the same activity of his moral and intellectual powers which distinguished its meridian.

"His conversation with his family upon the subject of his dissolution was free and cheerful. A few days before he died, he rose from his bed, and begged that it might be made up for him, so that he might die in a decent manner. His daughter told him that she hoped he would recover, and live many years longer. He calmly replied he hoped not.

"I had like to have forgotten to mention that he desired in his will that the elegant epitaph, suggested by his original occupation, which he composed for himself some years ago, should be inscribed on his tombstone. By this request he has declared his belief in the Christian doctrine of a resurrection."—*Life of Price.*

There is an article on Franklin's writings in one number of the Edinburgh Review. The writer, who is of Orthodox opinions, makes the following remarks on the religion of Franklin.

"If the example of this eminent person may well teach respect for philanthropic sentiments to one set of scoffers, it may equally impress upon the minds of another class the important lesson,

that veneration for religion is quite compatible with a sound, practical understanding. Franklin was a man of a truly pious turn of mind. The great truths of natural theology were not only deeply engraved on his mind, but continually present to his thoughts. As far as can be collected from his writings, he appears to have been a Christian of the Unitarian school; but if his own faith had not gone so far, he at least would have respected the religion of his country and its professors, and done everything to encourage its propagation, as infinitely beneficial to mankind, even if doubts had existed in his own mind as to some of its fundamental doctrines."

Such are the opinions of Benj. Franklin on religious subjects. You can judge for yourselves whether they are Christian or anti-christian. I suppose you will take his own word for his belief. How happens it then that you claim him as an unbeliever? Because in early life he was led astray for a period. Let us now attend to this point. To understand the reason why and how he became a Deist. You may listen to the following passages from his own pen.

"From my infancy I was particularly fond of reading, and all the money that came into my hands was laid out in the purchasing of books." "My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read." "There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another." "I had caught this by reading my father's books of dispute on religion."

"While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English Grammar, having at the end of it two little sketches on the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a dispute in the Socratic method." "I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer. And from reading Shaftesbury, and Collins having been made a doubter, as I already was in many points of our religious doctrines, I found this method the safest for myself, and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it."

"I was rather inclined to leave Boston, when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case. It was likely I might, if I staid, soon bring myself into scrapes; and further, that my *indiscreet* disputations about religion, began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist."

You here see the progress of his mind. He read his father's Calvinistic books and began to doubt the truth of most of the points in this system. He then read two infidel works, and began to doubt the truth of revelation. All this time you must remember that he was an uneducated printer's boy in Boston; and that his fondness for disputation acquired him the reputation of an unbeliever. We next find him in Philadelphia. These are his words.

"My chief acquaintance at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, James Ralph; all lovers of reading. Watson was a pious, sensible young man of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me; for which they both made me suffer."—*Life.*

Ralph and Franklin went to England. Ralph left a wife and one child, and Franklin was engaged to Miss Read. These are his words.

"For myself, I immediately got into work at Palmer's, a famous printing-house at Bartholomew-close, where I continued nearly a year. I was pretty diligent, but I spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings in plays and public amusements. We had nearly consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seemed quite to have forgotten his wife and child; and I by degrees my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great errata of my life, which I could wish to correct, were I to live it over again."

"At Palmer's, I was composing for the second edition of Wollaston's Religion of Nature. Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled a "Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain." I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I printed a small number. My printing this pamphlet was another erratum."

Soon after this Ralph married a milliner, although he had a wife and child in America. He went into the country to keep school, and left her under the protection of Franklin. Let him state the rest of the affair.

"I grew fond of her company, and *being at that time under no religious restraint*, and taking advantage of my importance to her, I attempted to take some liberties with her, *another erratum*, which she refused with a proper degree of resentment."

We now find Franklin returned to Philadelphia, preparing to establish himself in business. Let us see what he now says of his infidelity.

"Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know the *then* state of my mind, with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen when, after doubting by turns several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of the revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of the sermons which had been preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them. For the arguments of the Deists which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments *perverted* some others, particularly Collins and Ralph. But each of these having wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me, who was another free thinker, and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, *I began to suspect that this doctrine, though* it might be true, was not very useful.

"My London pamphlet appeared now not so clever a performance as I once thought it, and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument, so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings. I grew convinced that *truth, sincerity*, and integrity, in dealings between man and man, were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions which still remain in my journal book, to practise them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me as such; but I entertained an opinion, that though certain actions might not be bad, *because* they were forbidden by it, or because it commanded them; yet probably those actions might be forbidden because they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of the things being considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental, favourable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me through this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, free from any *wilful*, gross immorality or injustice, that might have been *expected from my want of religion.*"

I should think this language must satisfy any unbeliever, that Franklin found that infidelity would not do to live by. I will give one more extract showing just how far he went in his unbelief.

"I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; but though some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc. appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful; and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of a Deity; that he made the world and governs it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crimes will be punished and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion, and being to be found in all the religions we had in the country, I respected them all, though with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mixed with other articles which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, served principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with the opinion that the worst had some good effects, induced me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his religion."

Here then you see an old man writing his early life. He speaks plainly and decidedly against infidelity, and calls all those errors which he should wish to avoid in another life. He leaves the impression all along that his sentiments while writing were Christian. This no honest man will deny. It may then be asked, on what ground he is claimed as an unbeliever? When R. D. Owen was called upon to prove that Franklin was an unbeliever, he advanced but one single passage, which I will now quote.

"Upon one of Whitefield's arrivals from England, at Boston, he wrote to me that he should soon come to Philadelphia, but knew not where he should lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer was, You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome. He replied that if I made that offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, Dont let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for *your* sake."

Now what does all this prove? Simply that Franklin wished to have a joke with the *canting* Whitefield, and let him

know that he had sufficient respect for himself to give him his board, without doing it as a deed to the absent Christ. Truly, if you free inquirers can balance this against all the evidence I have presented, and say this outweighs all the passages quoted, your minds must be singularly constructed.

I have room for no further quotations, even if they were needed, as they are not. Now there are two sides to this question. Franklin was either a Christian or an infidel. I have produced enough of his own declarations to satisfy any one that he professed to hold Christian sentiments. If you still call him an unbeliever, you make him a hypocrite and a deceiver. Yes; there is no other ground. If then he was an infidel, he was a hypocrite and a deceiver; for he professed in public and private that he entertained Christian sentiments, and made others believe this. You are welcome to the man if this was his character, for every honest man must despise a hypocrite and deceiver. For my part, I believe he was a Christian, and, thus leave his character fair.

BERNARD WHITMAN.

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## *Considerations for Philosophical Rejecters of the Christian Faith.*

[Continued from page 536.]

2. IN the second place a dishonest will may appear in the examination of the Christian evidences when our faith is charged with evil influences and effects of which it has not been the source. There is an appearance of dishonesty at the outset. For how can there be either moral candour or philosophical exactness in testing the *truth* of Christianity by the character of its supposed influences and results. Let us for a moment yield the point to the infidel as to what those influences and results have in fact been. Because Christianity seems to me to have acted unfavourably upon man's temporal good, did therefore Christ not live? Because, as the pretence is, his instructions have made men superstitious, did he not therefore, by mighty works, prove his commission from God? Mere opinions as to what have been the *tendencies* of Christianity can no more overthrow the *facts* of Christianity, than the fact of the fall and decline of the Roman

Empire can be overthrown by opinions as to what have been the consequences of that decline and fall upon the world. It would seem the first question of an honest mind must be this ;—Am I, or am I not, bound to receive the facts of Christianity as true? And the next question should be,—Do the *doctrines* of Christianity rest firmly upon these facts? These questions are to be tried upon their proper merits, with an honest consideration of the direct evidence in the case. If we find ourselves obliged, by every law of right reasoning, to answer these questions in the affirmative, it is dishonest evasion of the real point at issue, to cry out against the *truth* of Christianity because she has been the origin and cause of certain ill effects. If history proves Christianity to have come from God, we are bound to receive it as true, nor, while this is shown to be the case with regard to the origin of our religion, *can* a corrupt influence have been exerted by the religion itself.

We have another like dishonest evasion of the real question when the truth of Christianity is tested by the conduct of her professors. The argument must stand thus. Christianity is not true because Christians are not perfect men. Or, Christianity is not true because we have known many bad men who assumed to themselves the Christian name. How would this argument stand if turned against the objector? Infidelity is not true because infidels are not perfect men. Infidelity is not true because many infidels have been bad men. For, let it be observed, infidelity, as much as Christianity, is a system of belief. It is a system indeed without order or beauty. Its creed comprises articles most incongruous and most inconsistent with each other. Infidelity, indeed, while it rejects the Christian miracles, proposes to the understanding greater wonders, and exacts a faith more blind than does Christianity. The principle of faith takes its root in the very essence of the soul and cannot be torn from it. The infidel believes in eternity, but rejects an Eternal Spirit! He has full faith in immensity, but denies that there can be an Infinite God! Suppose, then, we should direct against infidelity itself the argument which the unbeliever urges against the Christian faith. Why, he would not have an inch of ground left him to stand upon while he should make his attack. But, in fact, this very argument, as used against Christianity by the unbeliever, developes the strength of the Christian cause. For it is the peculiar glory of the Christian faith that it does propose to man perfection as his only worthy aim. It requires and is

adapted to produce the greatest expansion of the soul, and the most harmonious development of all its powers,—it crushes sin in its origin and at its very seat in the heart,—it casts its forbidding look at the unjust purpose ere it is formed, and frowns down the evil disposition at the moment of the first faint consciousness of its existence. And, besides, can the infidel presume to deny that Christians have, in all ages of the church, been the purest and noblest portion of the human race? Will he refuse to acknowledge that the understanding, and reason, and conscience of the HUMAN RACE have received Christianity as true? Thus, even allowing that the argument against Christianity from the character of its professors, bears upon the case, it is an argument which, while it overthrows the very ground which the infidel occupies in presenting it, at the same time brings out to view the strength of the positions on which Christianity rests.

But, it may be asked, how can a person persuade himself actually to disbelieve Christianity by reasonings which he, at the outset, in his own heart knows do not tend to its disproof? In replying to this we must touch upon what has before been alluded to, the influence of the will upon belief. On every great subject there are many general courses of thought among which the mind has liberty to make its own choice. There are different points from which it may be viewed, and on either of these points the mind may place itself. We may propose to ourselves various questions in regard to the subject, and, as we please, consider these questions in either their affirmative or negative aspects. We may enter into an honest investigation of all the evidence bearing upon the inquiries we propose, or we may select from that evidence all that tends to further some *purpose* we have in view, and neglect the rest. We may occupy our attention and fill our whole mind with certain partial views which, considered by themselves, and habitually regarded as embracing everything important in the case, will furnish ample opportunity for the successful action of that purpose. Especially is there opportunity for all this process to take place in the mind when the subject of thought is not a question of mere abstract curiosity, but concerns some institution which has acted and is acting with immense power upon the interests of the human race, and is thus a subject of living interest to our own hearts. The institution may be one which pretends to discuss and decide questions relating to the whole happiness and duty of my immortal soul. It may be an institution that has firmly established

itself among men,—it may have closely entwined itself with every other institution,—it may exert its influence upon every other interest of men, and, from the seat of its power, extend itself in every direction over the surface of the globe. This institution calls for my affection and service. The call excites in me a lively interest. My pulse quickens with emotion. The question immediately arises,—What shall I do? And that question conscience answers. Examine the claims that are presented, and if you find them just, your affection and service you must not fail to render. Gladly I obey the direction. But, anon, I find that this institution rebukes some of my habitual practices and opposes some of my cherished desires. Conscience had done the same thing before, but, instead of hushing the passions to listen to her quiet remonstrance, I had encouraged their tumult, and increased their power by giving my ear to the syren voices of temptation from without. And now again, strengthening her before timid voice, in the same strain, but with a louder tone, she commands me to submit to the rebuke and still conduct my examination with candour. Here is the very point for the formation of honest or dishonest purpose. Here is the hinge on which turns the question of my acceptance or rejection of the claims presented. Perhaps I may decide to obey the direction of duty, and if so, all will be well. No man ever put his trust in conscience to meet with eventual disappointment! Perhaps I may decide to set passion above conscience, and, exercising that power we all have of forming a dishonest resolution, refuse to view in clear light and with an open eye those claims which run so counter to my desires. The mind thus made up, my great objects thenceforward are, to seek for every excuse that can justify my purpose, to raise every possible presumption against the claims I am resolved to reject, to shut out from view every consideration that goes to confirm those claims,—in short, I most laboriously endeavour to deceive and ruin my own soul. How long can such a course be persisted in,—a course which so tends to spoil all candour of thought and honesty of purpose,—how long can it be persisted in before the mind is filled with objections to that which the heart wishes to reject, and the intellect is very well satisfied that the heart is right. O the awful power of the will! We are sometimes told that we have no power over ourselves, that we are tossed upon every wave of outward influence that may chance to roll by us, and that we may as well submit passively to move in the direction in which any

accident may impel us. But simply passive beings we are not. Active we must be in our own exaltation or ruin. Everyone will perceive the tendency of these remarks to illustrate the manner in which we may treat the great question,—Shall I receive, or shall I reject the Christian faith?

I have thus far spoken of one of the ways in which, under the general point I am endeavouring to illustrate, a dishonest will may appear in the examination of the evidences of Christianity. Such a will may appear in our putting out of view the direct testimony on which the truth of our religion rests, and testing the truth of this religion entirely by the character of its supposed influences, or of its formal professors. I have endeavoured also to describe the process by which disbelief is brought about under the influence of principles which, at first, we know to be false.

Let us now for a moment waive all that we have said on the first topic, and admit it to be right that the truth of Christianity should be made to depend upon the character of its supposed results. Even on this supposition, there is, in the examination of the claims of Christianity, yet another case of dishonesty which calls for illustration. We maintain that a dishonest will may appear in charging upon Christianity evil results of which she is not the source. Our religion was intended and adapted to act with great power upon the human soul, to pierce into its most secret depths, to become woven into its very texture. As it did in fact seize with a strong grasp on the human soul, it became at length closely united with all human interests and institutions. But these human interests and institutions were not completely and suddenly sanctified by the influence of Christianity,—and what wonder that in the ceaseless commotion of these interests, and in the progress of these institutions, evils should result similar to those of which the world had already had bitter experience? Now is it logical or honest to ascribe to every influence that has blended itself with these institutions and interests a portion of all the evil results that have flowed from their ever-changing action? Let such reasoning be universally adopted, and where would it lead us? In thousands of cases the very thing, whose influence it would prove injurious, has done much to mitigate evil consequences which could not be entirely prevented. It would prove a man to be partaker in the crime whose commission he had used all his power of sympathy and persuasion to prevent. As well might Howard be classed with the wretched inmates of the prisons he visited,

as Christianity be confounded with the evil influences which have surrounded her since she came into the world. The argument, that Christianity is an immense evil simply because it has been connected with immense evils in the history of our race, amounts to this, that Christianity has had a bad influence because it has been unable to sanctify the world in a moment. We should be ashamed thus to urge an idea whose opposite is so manifestly absurd did not much of the infidel's logic against Christianity require it. Besides, our religion *is* so interwoven with the miseries of the human race that we can easily conceive with what readiness a dishonest will would affirm that it has produced those miseries.

We shall conclude our present remarks by considering more particularly one of the pretences which the infidel sets forth relative to the point of which we have been speaking.

It is maintained by the infidel that the Christian religion has stopped the progress of the human race, and kept back the soul from its perfection. Look then, we would say to the unbeliever, at the world as it was when Christ came, and compare it with the world as it is now. Or make the comparison between different portions of the human race in its present condition. Compare Heathendom with Christendom. Can you honestly say that the world received a downward impulse at the advent of Christ, and has ever since been on the decline? Or do you really believe that man's nature is realizing its perfection in the bosom of the Asiatic continent, or on the desert of Zahara? But, you say, man has improved, not by the aid of Christianity, but in spite of the superstition which Christianity has fixed upon his soul. Is this assertion made from an ignorant mind or a dishonest heart? Look again at the human race, as it was when Christ came to it with the message of the Father's love, and look at that monster superstition, which, as you pretend, was brought into the world by Christianity, and which, from the infusions of Christianity has received its deadly strength and poisonous venom. What, in a religious point of view, were the elements which Christianity, at its first introduction, found already at work in the human mind? Did she find men in their own eyes, a race of mere animal beings, contented with a pure sensual philosophy, troubled with no superstitious fancies, looking upon nature as the great All in All, not even dreaming of a Maker and Ruler of the Universe, or of the reality of a spiritual power and excellence beyond the reach of their bodily vision? Precisely the contrary of all this. Is it pos-

sible that, with the eyes open and the mind disposed to sincerity, you can deny that Christianity found man *possessed of a religious nature?* Look at the multitude of deities with which even the material world was swarming, and then ask yourself if you can honestly deny that man's nature, whencesoever it came, was, at that time, disposed to adoration. But, you say, political men ruled the minds of the multitude and gave them this direction. But, because man's religious nature was used for political purposes, did therefore political designs create that nature? But, you may pretend, philosophers, though they saw the folly of superstition, found it for their *interest* to keep it alive in the minds which they wished to control for their own selfish ends. How came it then that the philosophers more deeply than any others felt the power of the same superstition in their own souls? Besides, what foundation did they discover in the common mind on which to build this broad and gloomy structure of superstitious observances and fears. But, you may inquire, was not all this religion but a magnificent piece of hypocrisy which the whole human race had taken upon itself to enact? Alas, to what extremities will your pretended disbelief in man's religious nature drive you? How does this inquiry suppose the falsehood of that testimony which is borne to us by all histories from all ages! But, supposing there was a place for the inquiry, you might be asked, where and what was the *reality* corresponding to this stupendous hypocrisy of the human heart. For all hypocrisy implies something real as its subject. I cannot pretend to possess a character of which no *idea* has entered my mind.

We will ask you to look at those portions of the world which the beams of Christianity have never touched and see if you do not find man a religious being there. See if you do not find him a religious being where even if philosophers could make him such, no philosophers exist, and where the rude simplicity of savage life precludes the idea that religious systems have been built on the basis of political intrigue. Look, for instance, at the accounts given by the missionaries to Polynesia concerning the degraded islanders whom they laboured to convert. "Religion mixed in all the occupations and amusements of the Polynesians, and its rites were interwoven with every act of their lives; but it was a religion that debased instead of humanizing.—There were gods of peace, several gods of war, the god of the ocean, the god of accidents, and the god of idiots,—for they believed that all

idiots were inspired.—Besides their divinities, the creative fancy of the Polynesians peopled their lovely isles with ethereal existences, who, like our fairies, sported in the moonbeams, and held their revels in the loveliest dells, and by the sweetest streamlets; or, emulating the dim visions of the Gael, robed themselves in the mountain mists, shone in the pale meteor's flame, and mantled amid the howling of the midnight storm."*

This may be laughed at and called superstition—and superstition it is. But superstition itself proves man's religious nature. For what *is* superstition but a wrong and perverse development of that nature? Those faculties in the soul which are the source of superstition cannot be annihilated,—the superstition must be corrected by their being trained aright.

The Gospel found the Jews a peculiar people,—why it so found them, it does not sufficiently bear on our present purpose to inquire. So it was. They were a nation by themselves, and with them the religious nature was in a peculiar condition. But, as we have already said, religion existed in some state, the religious nature of man was developed in some sense, all over the world. The question is, has Christianity retarded the perfection of man? And this question is in great measure answered when we ascertain whether it has had a happy influence on that religious principle which inheres in his very constitution and which, taken away, he would be a being of entirely different character. Let us then consider what influence Christianity exerted upon two things,—the Gentile philosophy and the Jewish religion. We say the Gentile philosophy,—for that exhibited all the attainments even of a religious nature which man's unaided powers had been able to make.

Let it be observed the discussion proceeds now on the supposition, whose truth cannot be denied, that man is a religious, or, as the infidel may express it, a superstitious being. Adoration he will pay,—forms of worship he will have. He is made essentially religious, and he can no more forsake his religious than he can his intellectual constitution. The great question then is,—has man, as a religious being, been benefited by Christianity.

What, then, before the advent of Christ, was the culture which Gentile philosophy gave to the religious nature of man?

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* "Progress of the Gospel in Polynesia."

The best of which it was susceptible? The question need not be answered. Who does not know that Gentile philosophy utterly failed to satisfy man's religious wants, and that, before Christ came, it was fast perverting his religious nature? Philosophy made religion a thing of metaphysical inquiries and scholastic distinctions, a thing for learned and acute minds, rather than the fountain of life and joy to the whole human race. It had taken it away from the warmth and action of real life, and removed it to the thin and cold atmosphere of wordy abstractions. It made it to consist in a set of dogmas for ceaseless intellectual contention, rather than in a system of life-giving truth, warming the affections and claiming the service of the heart. And, while Gentile philosophy thus gave a perverted development to the religious nature, it gave a wrong action to the intellectual powers. And why? Because, the religious nature being perverted, the harmony of the whole mental constitution was destroyed. The whole mind lost its balance and proportion. The religious nature lost its right action on the understanding, the understanding refused to be the servant of the soul. The human mind, becoming more and more disjoined in itself, exhibited itself in more and more monstrous developments, and thus the soul, instead of being led on under the influences of Gentile philosophy nearer and nearer to its perfection, by the disproportionate development of its powers, was filled with perpetual strife and discord. But Christianity comes and casts in its influence upon the elements that were thus darkly and restlessly struggling with each other. And what *was* its influence? Let history reply. Let her compare for us the philosophy of Christian with the philosophy of Gentile minds. Will the comparison justify the unbeliever's pretence that Christianity has kept the human mind back from its perfection?—or will it prove that pretence to have come either from dishonesty or ignorance?

Again, what was the effect of Christianity on the religion of the Jews? Did it, by its influence on that religion, keep the human mind back from its perfection? Was the Jewish nation suddenly arrested by the hand of Christ in an onward and upward path of glory? Christ found the Jews far before all others in their ideas concerning religion. We do not see how even the infidel can deny this. But he found them narrowing down religion more and more to a round of ceremonies and forms, removing it from its proper seat in the heart, and allowing it to preside only over the external man. He found them exhibiting in many things the greatest superstition,—and su-

perstition results from a perverse development of the religious nature. Did Christ increase the evil? Did he make the Jews more superstitious, more hypocritical, more trifling, more heartless in their religious faith and practice? Or did his religion purify everything that it touched, turning even corruption into life, establishing itself in the heart of man, and going forth to destroy the wickedness of his hands? Did it not change the lifeless form into the living reality, the hypocritical service into the worship of sincerity and truth, the form of godliness into its power, and the agonies of superstition into the hope and joy of a reasonable faith? If it did, what becomes of the assertion that Christianity has kept the soul of man back from its perfection? Must it not come from dishonesty or from ignorance?

Christianity has then freed Gentilism from idolatrous worship, and false philosophy and Judaism from the hypocrisy and superstition that had corrupted its religious faith. The unbeliever says that Christianity has filled the world with superstition. Christianity, considered as an abstract system of faith and morals, has not the slightest tinge of superstition. It is as clear as sunlight, and, by the reasonableness of its statements and requisitions, it has commended itself, not only to the greatest minds the world has seen, but to minds the most scrutinizing and naturally the most cautious and skeptical. But, admitting for a moment the truth of the statement whose falsity we assert, suppose that superstition has sometimes flowed from Christianity as its source, and not invariably from those perversions of the religious nature which have been caused by the false religions and bad passions of the human race. Even with this concession, we should maintain that the superstition which Christianity has destroyed or prevented is infinitely worse and infinitely greater in amount than the superstition to which she has given life. But the influence of Christianity, so far as it has in truth been the influence of Christianity, and not of human additions to the teachings of Christ and his holy Apostles, has always been to save men from superstition. Had Christ not come, it is morally certain that the whole world would even now be tyrannized over by a merciless superstition that would crush the religious nature, and with it the happiness and glory of man, in its unrelaxing grasp. Christianity was absolutely necessary to save the soul of man from a monstrous development of its faculties, and to introduce harmony and beauty into its growth. Thus she has not only bestowed upon him the richest blessings he could

enjoy, but saved him from the deepest miseries he could endure,—blessings that crown this life as well as the future,—and miseries which, so far as human foresight can discover, and wherever the soul might exist, would not have ceased to embitter the waters of life;—and thus even the infidel and the atheist have cause, if they would open their eyes to see it, cause in every circumstance of happiness for which they are indebted to the institutions of society, to the improvement of the human mind,—nay, or to any intellectual advances they themselves have been enabled to make, to let their souls overflow with devout thankfulness to God for the mission of Jesus Christ. The Christian faith, wherever it has come, has taken away that ignorant terror on all the great subjects of death, judgment, the spiritual world, man's immortality, which in all ages has poured forth its dark floods of superstition over the benighted regions of the earth. Even now Christianity is anxiously and affectionately labouring to put away from the earth the superstition of infidelity. For even infidelity has its religion and its adoration. Its creed contains mysteries greater than any that ever claimed celestial origin, and it has an adoration as blind and senseless as that of the heathen idolater. It must subject the principle of faith to a severer torture than can be inflicted by any form of Christianity, however corrupted by superstition. We would beseech the unbeliever to come to a more *reasonable faith.* We would say to him,—faith in God is better than faith in Nature as God. Faith in a Creator is better than faith in an uncreated world. Faith in the spiritual world is better than faith in the powers and combinations of matter. Faith in the immortality of the soul is better than faith in its annihilation. Faith in another life can alone enable us to enjoy the happiness, to perform the duties, and to finish the work of this. C. A. B.

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## *On the Characteristics of St. John's Gospel.**

The most striking peculiarity in the Gospel of St. John and that which will be found to comprehend and explain nearly all the others, is the manner in which he proves the

* The views which are offered in the following dissertation are taken principally from a work of Herder on the same subject.

Messiahship and Divine character of our Saviour. This point,—to establish which must have been the ultimate design of all the Evangelists, whatever means each one might judge best adapted to the wants of those for whom he wrote,—the author of the fourth Gospel endeavours to deduce from the very nature of Christianity, the purity and sublimity of its doctrines. From the pursuance of this plan appear to have arisen all those peculiarities which distinguish St. John's Gospel from those of the other Evangelists. He has omitted many things which they record, such as the nativity, genealogy, ordinances, and most of the miracles of our Saviour: he has recorded too, many things which they omit. These omissions on the one hand, and these additions on the other, prove indeed, the truth of Eichhorn's supposition, that St. John must have been acquainted with, and have presupposed the existence of, some other Gospel, and that in many instances he has supplied deficiences in the narrative parts of that Gospel. But still, this hypothesis will not account for all his peculiarities. To supply those circumstances in the life of our Saviour which his predecessors had omitted, could be, after all, but a secondary object with a writer like John. It surely was not his intention merely to gather the fragments which others had left, to furnish limbs for the *Torso* (the body) of the Jewish Gospel. The original and finished character of his work, planned as it is with systematic exactness, and executed with measured regularity, forbids this supposition: he himself disclaims it where he tells us, "And many other signs truly, did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book": and again, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." This strong hyperbole with which his work closes, as it asserts the uselessness of the undertaking, so it proves, that to supply deficiencies in the narrative of the other Gospels, was not the sole intention of our Evangelist.

The true design of this Gospel will, I think, appear from a comparison of its peculiarities with the wants which must have been felt at that time, by the converts out of Palestine, and which the Jewish Gospel left unsatisfied. The historical collection, which the first three Evangelists made use of, had been prepared in the earliest age of Christianity, at Jerusalem, and for native Jews. It was therefore contrived to meet views which were confined to that age and place; it was

obliged to conform, in some measure, to the expectations which Judea had formed of her Messiah, and to produce those tokens, collected from the prophets, without which she refused to recognise him. But in the mean time Christianity had extended beyond the limits of Palestine, and speculations concerning it had arisen which were modified according to the conceptions of the different nations who embraced it. What the Jews of Palestine deemed indispensable had become of little importance to those of Asia Minor, and was altogether rejected by the heathens. The Gentile converts had, of course, no relish for the ideal of the Jewish Messiah; they were involved in mystical notions and abstruse speculations of their own: and at the time when a single Greek word, composed of the initials of these five—*Ἰησους Χρίστος, Θέου υἵος, σωτηρ*—(Jesus Christ, the son of God, the Saviour,) was to the Apostles the symbol of all Christianity, and did in fact contain all that they preached, disputes and theories concerning the how and the when, had sprung up among the philosophers of the the east and the south. They endeavoured to trace to some remote origin the connection between God and the Saviour, to reconcile his religion with their philosophy, and thus continued to involve that simple formula in doubts and mysteries, till the white robe of Christianity whose purity had been so carefully preserved by the Apostles, became in the hands of those sectarians a coat of many colours. It was then that St. John, the companion and favourite of our Saviour, the best qualified, and at that time probably the only living original witness of all the miracles, wrote his Gospel: it was therefore that he gave the brief but comprehensive theory we find at the beginning of his work, not to combat the systems of the Gnostic philosophers, of Cerinthus, of Saturnius, or of Basilides, but simply to explain, according to the principles of the Hellenists, by the use of the term "*Λογος*," the "*Πνεύμα του Θέου*" of the Jews, and thus to render all further speculations superfluous. He did not contradict what had been said in the Gospel of Palestine; the authority of that Gospel was still to continue; it was of apostolic origin and contained the oldest views of Christianity; it was his intention to explain, confirm, and render it universally practical. That this was his purpose, the author declares himself where he tells us—"But these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." And with this purpose in view the

characteristic peculiarities of his Gospel may be easily explained. For instance;—the Jewish Gospel found, among other tokens by which the Messiah was to be recognised, this,—that he should be a descendant of David, born at Bethlehem. Accordingly two of our Evangelists have preserved records which trace his lineage up to that distinguished ancestor. Of this pedigree John makes no account: he considered the only practical part of the evangelical history as commencing with our Saviour's baptism. Of what use too, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, could this genealogy be to the foreign nations for whom he wrote, and who prided themselves upon the names of their own ancestors? In his Gospel therefore, no mention is made of the lustre derived by Christ from the fame of his progenitors,—he is simply the son of Joseph and Mary, and as far as nationality was concerned,—not a Jew, but the Saviour of the world. Again, the original Gospel, in speaking of our Saviour's miracles, conforms to the views of the people for whom it was intended; it gives a great number and many that are similar in their nature. For the Jews, according to a narrow interpretation of their prophet Isaiah, considered miracles as the chief token of the Messiah, so that St. Paul makes it a distinguishing point between this people and the Greeks, that "the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom." From St. John's omission of most of the miracles of our Saviour, therefore, we are not, I think, authorized to infer with Eichhorn, that miracles did not form a part of his idea of the Messiah, but rather to seek an explanation in the design with which this Evangelist wrote. With the people of Asia Minor, Africa, Greece, and other countries beyond Palestine, the miracles of Jesus had of course only the weight of distant and past wonders,—a long catalogue of them was of little use; he who could heal one diseased, and restore one dead to life, could, in the same manner, cure and resuscitate thousands. The miracles which St. John brings are few therefore, but striking and well attested. They are generally introduced as the occasions of some important discourse or remark of our Saviour, and are mentioned not so much for their own individual value, but as symbols of one continuing, permanent miracle.

On the same principles we may account for most of the other omissions and additions which distinguish this Gospel. Some of them indeed require particular explanations, but these are also obvious. St. John, for instance, takes no notice of his Master's transfiguration on the mount. This is

because the design of that miracle was merely temporary. He dwells particularly on the discourses which our Saviour held at Jerusalem. This is probably to meet the insinuation which might be made, that the Teacher of men had confined himself to an obscure corner of the country and to the most ignorant part of the people. When he omits to mention the ordinances which Jesus appointed and the form of prayer which he gave, it is, no doubt, because the general adoption of these among the converts to Christianity had rendered it unnecessary. But a consideration of all these particulars, as well as an examination of the peculiarities in the language and style of our Evangelist, would far exceed the limits of this essay.

Above all then, be it observed, that the evidences which the fourth Gospel brings for the Messiahship of Jesus are founded upon his doctrines and discourses. It was the author's design to place the character and office of the Messiah in a clear light, to show what was meant by the Son of God, and in what sense he is to be considered as the Saviour of the world. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," says our Saviour in the Gospel of St. John, "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." And thus indeed did this Apostle hold up the image of the Messiah, not to the eyes of the Jewish nation only, but to the view of the whole world, that all who looked upon it might be saved.

F. H. Hedge.

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# NOTICES OF BOOKS.

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*Counsels to Young Men on Modern Infidelity, and the Evidences of Christianity. By* John Morison, D.D.—*author of an Exposition of the Book of Psalms, &c.* Boston, James Loring. 12mo. pp. 237. 1834.

This work, though not marked by any originality of view, is pervaded by a spiritual fervour that warmly recommends it to the heart. The author seems to be a man who has not only assured himself of the *external* and *historical* truth of the Christian

religion, but has also verified the convictions of his understanding in the experience of his heart. Every Christian, who has made great spiritual progress, must have enjoyed the peculiar delight which results from what may be called the second establishment of the claims of our faith,—that proof which, after the religion is seen to stand firm on the foundations of human testimony and the history of the world, is found in the principles and affections of the spiritual nature. This internal voice which, in gentle but distinct tones, sounds up from the depths of the heart, and speaks of the accordance there is between the teachings of Jesus and the best powers and noblest aspirations of the soul,—this is the voice which persuades us, with a grasp that nothing in life and nothing in death can relax, to cling to the hope set before us in the Gospel. After the intellect has done its part in persuading us to the belief and practice of Christianity, and we, having honestly guided it in its examination, faithfully submit to its just conclusions, the heart, with its own powerful and irresistible logic, comes in to bind us with new closeness to that service of God which is perfect freedom.

We express ourselves thus in order to apply our remarks as a commendation of that feature of the work before us in which the author manifests his strong internal sense of the value of Christianity, and in which he does much, as we think, to infuse the same sense into the hearts of his readers. Christianity is to be loved as well as believed, and she asks for that peculiar kind of belief which results from love. She is to be known with that knowledge of the affections and the soul of which she continually speaks.

But let us show what we mean in our author's own words.

"The man who is a genuine believer is as fully conscious, as he is of existence, that Christianity is no cunningly devised fable. It has established its throne in the deep-seated convictions of his heart. He has felt the transformation it has wrought; "old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." His entire character has been favourably affected by it. Upon his once gloomy path it has shed the light of immortality; it has taught him to "rejoice even in tribulation;" it has changed all the aspects of life, by throwing over them the hues of eternity; it has conferred on him a reality of happiness which the whole creation had no power of imparting. In his own person he beholds a monument of the truth and excellence of Christianity; which forever forbids him to doubt. By other evidences, indeed, his character is confirmed; but in his peace of mind, in that "hope which is full of immortality," and in the heavenward bearing of his once earthly character, he is enabled to feel that Christianity is no 'cunningly devised fable.' "—pp. 65, 66.

That the intrinsic moral beauty of Christianity should be thus set forth to young minds, and for such this work is intended, seems to us of great importance. We deem it important because

it does that which nothing else can do and which is especially important to be done. We may give a young person instruction upon intellectual points, and furnish his mind with a great many *ideas* on religious subjects, and yet produce but a very inconsiderable and unworthy development of his religious nature. And it is the *expansion of his soul* which is needed, rather than the *information of his intellect;*—indeed the latter is of great value no farther than it is connected with the former. If we can make a child's heart glow with piety to God, and benevolence to his fellow-children, it is far better than if we should delight his eager curiosity by showing unto him all mysteries and all knowledge.

The religious instructor, who is satisfied because his pupil can freely repeat chapters from the Bible, can hardly have for himself any distinct idea of that process of growth which takes place in the immortal nature when the spirit of truth has been infused into it and is quickening it in every part. And we shall far better guard the young man against the specious objections of the infidel, as well as give him a far more rapid progress towards the world of spiritual life and joy, by persuading him to take unto himself the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, than by carrying him through a long and laborious process of training as to those external supports of Christianity which are of an inferior and incidental character, and informing him of all the battles, small and great, which, in the history of the church and of infidelity, have been fought around those supports.

The trait we have remarked upon as distinguishing the book before us appears again in the remarks made upon the character of Christ, the description of which he concludes in the following strain.

"Whence such a character as this? Was it from earth or heaven? If from earth, where can we look for its great *archetype?* Not surely in the Gentile world; for it infinitely surpassed the *ideal* models which were laid down by the purest and most enlightened of its philosophers. Not in the Jewish world, for even its most cherished patriarchs were chargeable with innumerable imperfections; and in the days of Jesus of Nazareth, the great body of the nations were peculiarly degraded, both as it respected the acquirements of the understanding, and the habits of the life and conduct. Whence, then, this mysterious and wonderful personage,—this Being so unlike all the generations of men who had preceded him or who have followed after him, yet clothed in a human form, possessed of human sympathies, and subject to human woes? No wonder that Rousseau, in his exquisite and well-known contrast between Socrates and Christ, should feel himself constrained to remark, that 'the inventor of such a personage would be a more astonishing character than the hero.'" pp. 70, 71.

Although we admire the sentiments with which our author speaks of Christianity, we cannot approve of the indiscriminating severity with which he speaks of the infidel. There is a bitterness in some of his remarks which, even were it deserved by *all* infidels, as, at the hazard, perhaps, in these intemperate and intolerant times of being called apologists for infidelity, we think it is not, we are most thoroughly persuaded that it is not calculated to reclaim the unbeliever from the error of his thoughts, or the error of his ways. When shall we be persuaded that, in raising men from earth to heaven, that course is not most successful which tends to stir up the bad passions of a bad heart!

Our author needlessly draws in at the close of his work a treatise on the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, in which he supports, in the most rigid form, the doctrine of their *verbal* inspiration. His arguments appear to us to be of a very *verbal* kind. In commenting on that passage, in which Christ charges those who reject him with not having the word of God abiding in them, he speaks as follows.

"Here several things are to be noticed. In the first place, the Scriptures of the Jews, which did not abide in them through their unbelief are distinctly recognised as *the word of God.*

* * * In the third place they are spoken of emphatically as *the writings*, evidently including them all, and leaving no room to dispute the divine origin of their diction any more than of the doctrines they contained"!

Again, in proof of the verbal inspiration of the prophecies he quotes the passage—"Holy men *spake* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." He accounts for the difference of style in the different books of Scripture, by saying that "the Spirit of God was as capable of influencing the mind of a prophet or an apostle in coincidence with his own tastes, predilections, and education, as in opposition to them." A defence of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, consisting of such arguments, may, we trust, be safely left to itself. If the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures were necessary to the purposes of faith and worship, alas for the world. If the inspired words make an essential part of the Holy Book, the Bible is every day and moment slipping farther and farther from our grasp.

If this book should fall into the hands of any unbeliever, we would beseech him deeply to consider the nature of that internal argument for Christianity which it sets forth, that argument which, were no other argument within our reach, would still make Christianity the religion of the greatest, the wisest, and the holiest of our race. C. A. B.

*Letters to the Young. By* Maria Jane Jewsbury. From the third London edition. Perkins, Marvin, & Co., Boston. 1834. pp. 264.

We should think the authoress of these Letters is not the mere copyist of what others have said and written. She pours out her sentiments and thoughts with a freshness and force which indicate that they have been fully realized in her own mind and heart. The style is marked by naturalness and simplicity, and not unfrequently, and seemingly without the slightest effort, it rises to eloquence. Little turns of beautiful and original expression sometimes occur, which strike the mind as no mean proofs that we are reading the work of a thinker. Our authoress seems to have felt in her own heart the matchless excellence of the gospel and the supreme power of the love of Christ. We have been particularly pleased with those letters in which she endeavours to impress her young friends with a true sense of the value of the Holy Scriptures. Had we space we should be glad to quote from these letters. And indeed we cannot refuse to make a short extract from the sixth letter in which we find a just thought uttered with all the unction of true feeling.

"God, my dear friends, is as sufficient to satisfy the heart, as he is worthy to occupy the mind. It is good to be laid upon a sick bed (if he bless it)—to see the vanity of even the world's best and fairest. What is poetry to the languid ear? What are pictures to the aching eye? or praise, or music, or gaiety, to the sick and sinking heart? Where is the mind itself with all its boasted resources? Yet when the thoughts are confused and the fancy fevered,—the judgment weakened and the memory faithless,—even then the words which God speaks in his Gospel are spirit and life. Just where the world leaves us, he takes us up."—pp. 79, 80.

We could not help being reminded by this passage of one of our own dear friends now afflicted with disease, for whose sickness we have wept much, and for whose recovery we have often prayed. We could not help thinking of a striking remark he made to us as to the source of his consolation in the pains of his body and the weakness of his mind. At times, (he said), a rich text from the glorious Gospel will float through my mind all day, and come and go like the joyful strains of some rich melody which has long been familiar to the heart. What a reward even on earth for making the Bible one's study and delight!

In these Letters, familiar as they are, we sometimes meet with a thought of great importance. Take the following for an example.

"Minds of a reflective and somewhat timid cast are most liable to the influence of morbid sensibility; they soon begin to look through

rather than upon society, and consequently become disgusted with the construction of it. They serve their pleasures as children do their toys—pull them to pieces in order to ascertain their internal mechanism; and their emotions as the same children serve their rose-buds—open them to accelerate their time of bloom. Without intentional want of benevolence, they feel little towards their fellow-creatures beyond general good-will, or perfect indifference, whilst their affections are few, ardent, arbitrary, and exclusive."

With the *technical* theology embodied in these Letters we cannot agree, and we sometimes find what we esteem errors expressed in their grossest form. We did hope and trust that ideas like that expressed in the following couplet, quoted by our authoress, were passing out of approbation and use.

> "For God before, man like himself did frame,
> But God himself now like mortal man became."

Would that the writer could have considered what she meant before she transcribed these lines. The thought contained in them to which we allude is too shocking for criticism.

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# CORRESPONDENCE AND INTELLIGENCE.

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### SIXTH LETTER TO REV. ADIN BALLOU.

*Harvard, November* 17, 1834.

Dear Sir,

I now proceed to make some remarks on the following passage contained in your letter:—

"Finally, dear brother, pardon me for alluding to a practice in your denomination, which is as offensive to me, as the one I have been vindicating is to you. I mean the almost perpetual attention which your ministers and writers pay to their distinguishing doctrine of the divine Unity. I am a Unitarian. I was never any thing else. I drew my Unitarianism out of the Bible before I ever heard of Trinitarianism. It has always remained with me. I value the doctrine for what I deem its self-consistency and agreement with divine revelation. But to imagine it a doctrine necessary to be laboured over and over, year after year, in almost every sermon, periodical, and tract, I am no more able, than to imagine how Trinitarians contrive to make a belief in the Trinity the mainspring of vital religion."

If it is a fact that our ministers and writers pay "almost perpetual attention to the doctrine of the divine Unity," and if this "doctrine is laboured over and over, year after year, in almost every sermon, periodical, and tract;" I must confess it is a fact I was not acquainted with; and were I to form a judgment in regard to this thing from what I have read, observed, and heard, it would differ considerably from yours. For these twenty years past I have been generally connected with Unitarian

societies, and more than eight years of this time I have been a hearer. I have heard many Unitarians preach, and a great many Unitarian sermons; *i. e.* sermons which inculcated Unitarian views of the gospel. And I cannot now recollect a single sermon among them all, in which our distinguishing doctrine was the theme or burden of the discourse! To be more particular, I do not recollect that I have ever heard a sermon, the apparent object of which was to disprove the doctrine of the Trinity, or of the equality of the Son to the Father, or of the two natures of Christ, or of his preëxistence, or of the personality of the Holy Spirit. Others may have heard these subjects frequently discussed in the pulpit, but I have not. I can easily call to mind a great many sermons which I have heard delivered by Unitarian clergymen, and if they have, in my presence, dwelt on these controverted doctrines just alluded to, I do not now remember it. I would not say that I never heard a sermon on these topics; but if I have, it now escapes my recollection. You know that the Orthodox generally bring very different charges against us. They charge us with keeping back our peculiar doctrines. They complain of our sermons, that they do not go far enough: they frequently call our discourses "moral essays": they object that we dwell too much on duties, virtues, and human ability. You know what language they use, and I need not repeat it here.

I do not mean to insinuate that we have been silent at all times and in all places about the Trinity. We regard it not as a trifling error, and we are prompt to embrace proper opportunities to correct it. But this is only one among many errors which we are earnestly labouring to correct.

If you examine our periodicals of these last twenty years, you will find that our writers have paid no small share of attention to many other subjects besides the doctrine of the Trinity and the Divine Unity. I refer you to the "Christian Disciple," "Christian Examiner," "Unitarian Miscellany," "Sparks' Tracts," "The Liberal Preacher," "Unitarian Advocate," "Scriptural Interpreter," and "Christian Register"—and also to "The Unitarian," the death of whose editor was so eloquently and feelingly announced in your last paper. Our common and deeply lamented friend was the open, the earnest, the active friend to Unitarian Christianity. But the pages of "The Unitarian," as well as his other writings, will show that he was labouring not baesly to check and destroy the influeuce of a single error, nor to establish a single truth. Trinitarianism was not the only object which he boldly and often opposed. He did not employ all his time and energies in attempts to establish the doctrine of the Divine Unity. He contended with Calvinism, with Universalism, with Infidelity, with Atheism. It was his desire and endeavour to render this work highly useful to the cause of practical religion. But I need not remind you of these things.

If you will read the publications mentioned above, I think you will own that our writers have not confined their attention to that article of faith from which they have taken their distinctive name. They have sought to give mankind juster views of religion and of divine revelation generally. They believed that wrong notions were entertained by many of their Christian brethren, not only in regard to the Trinity, but also in regard to native depravity, election, reprobation, the divine decrees, the divine sovereignty, the atonement, regeneration, faith, good works, the condition of those who die in infancy, the true evidences of a Christian character and hope, &c. &c. They have been busy also in pleading the cause of charity, peace, temperance, benevolence. In their studies they have thought of Sunday-schools, of the inmates of prisons and hospitals, of the sailor, of the slave, of the poor and afflicted. They have laboured much to check the progress of infidelity.

And if you consult the other publications of Unitarians, I think you will observe the same wide range of thought and the same large and com-

prehensive design. I refer you to the writings of Fox, Cappe, Channing, Buckminster, Thacher, Ware, Palfrey, Greenwood, Colman. They will tell you that they had aimed to do something more than to refute the Trinitarian error, and assert and defend the Divine Unity. Noah Worcester has written much relating to the Trinity. But remove from his writings every sentence which relates immediately to that or the opposite doctrine, and have we nothing left to speak for the warm heart and fruitful mind of this distinguished man, this aged and devoted servant of God?

As to our Tracts, it might be expected that our distinguishing doctrine, and the one which is opposed to it, would, in some form or other, be often brought into view; and we have a considerable number of tracts devoted wholly or partly to an explanation and defence of our views of God and of Christ. This seemed necessary in order to meet the various and varying wants of the people. But after all, I believe there is but a comparatively small number of our tracts which treat chiefly on this subject. I have now by me a list of the titles of forty-nine tracts of the first, and ten of the second series, which have been published by the American Unitarian Association. I need not copy these titles to show you their variety of topics. You can easily examine them for yourself, and also those of the many tracts which have been published since. And when you have done so, I think you will be ready to acknowledge that, in our eagerness to maintain the Divine Unity, we have not been wholly unmindful of other important doctrines—that in our zeal to disseminate doctrines, we have not quite forgotten duties—and that in our endeavours for the progress of Unitarianism, we have not been indifferent about piety and virtue. We have aimed not only to enlighten the mind, but to warm and purify the heart; not only to deliver men from the bondage of error, but also from the greater bondage of sin. We have had many difficulties to meet—many trials to bear—many obstacles to surmount.

I could not help thinking, my dear brother, that you had wrong views of Unitarian ministers and writers, when you spoke of their "almost perpetual attention to their distinguishing doctrine." I do not attribute this to a want of candour and fairness, but to a want of opportunity to know the true state of the case, as you belong to a different denomination, and are yourself constantly employed in preaching. I have dwelt long on this subject, believing you would be glad to learn that you have been in an error respecting it.

Judging from what has come within my own knowledge, I should rather say that our preachers and writers dwelt on this doctrine too little, than too much. For when I read Moses and the prophets—when I read the instructions of Christ and his Apostles, I cannot persuade myself that this is an unimportant doctrine. When I read the decalogue—when I hear the Saviour repeating the first and great commandment—when I hear him saying, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"—when I listen to Paul standing in the midst of Mars-hill, and addressing the philosophers and people of Athens—when I mark how he begins his sublime discourse—when I read his Epistles, I think I find strong reasons for attaching great importance to the doctrine of the Divine Unity. And when I cast my eye over Catholic countries,—and when I observe how much evil is occasioned by the doctrine of the Trinity nearer home, there seems to me to be a pressing demand for great attention to the true doctrine of the Godhead, and to the errors with which it is still encumbered.

With sentiments of undiminished respect and esteem, I am your friend and brother, JONATHAN FARR.

REV. ADIN BALLOU.

## OBITUARY.

We have a mournful task to perform in introducing to these last pages of this periodical our remarks upon an event whose occurrence, we doubt not, has touched the hearts of all our readers with no common sadness.

He who conducted "The Unitarian," and gave to it its life and interest, is no more. The service he has done so well he can do no longer. We believe that he finished the work which God gave him to do on earth, and that a new and nobler work now occupies the energies of his immortal spirit in heaven. We sorrow not as those who have no hope,—for what cause should we have to blush at the weakness of our faith, if, with the departure of every Christian friend, that hope were not increased! What cause should we have to blush for our own slavery to earth, did not the realities of heaven grow brighter to our view whenever a lofty spirit from our very midst makes for itself a clear and glorious pathway to those realities through the clouds of worldly troubles!

Bernard Whitman was born at East Bridgewater, Mass., on the 8th of June, 1796. He was the thirteenth child of Deacon John Whitman. He had no early advantages of education except that of attending a country district school. In his early youth he exhibited that bold and fearless spirit, that open sincerity of opinion and adventurous effort in the accomplishment of what he deemed right, which distinguished him throughout life. His father often expressed the fear that the qualities of this kind which he displayed, would bring him to some untimely end. In 1813, he made up his mind to get an education. He had been very industrious in working upon the farm. He now went to Mansfield, where he laboured in a cotton factory for two years. He was enabled to save about one hundred dollars, and he then applied for admission to the Academy at Exeter, which was granted him. During the two years which he spent at Exeter, he was distinguished for the ardour with which he pursued his studies, and for maintaining the cause of the younger members of the school, against those disposed to tyrannize over them.

He entered college (Harvard University) in 1817. During his first year he rose rapidly as a scholar. At the commencement of his Sophomore year, he was engaged in the rebellion of the students, and was punished with rustication. He spent the time of his absence, except that which was occupied in conducting a winter school, in pursuing the studies of his class, and kept up with them, but, being refused a reädmission to this class, he entered the one next below. He staid only a few weeks so as to take an honourable dismission from the college. He then kept school for a time at Billerica, and was the chief instrument in the establishment of the academy at that place. He commenced his theological studies with an Orthodox minister at Wellfleet, and finished them at Beverly. He then took up his abode in Cambridge as a candidate. He preached in several places. He performed the duties of a minister six months for the small society at Middlesex Village. He received a call from the people at Duxbury, which he did not accept. He was settled at Waltham, Feb. 15, 1826. After his settlement he was very active in promoting the improvement of the girls in the factory. He was the principal instrument in establishing the Rumford Institute in Waltham. He was also actively zealous in the cause of the Sunday-school. As a teacher he secured the confidence and love of his pupils and made powerful impressions upon their hearts.

At Exeter, he was very much excited concerning religious opinions, and very much prejudiced against the Unitarian belief. His predilections for the doctrines of Orthodoxy continued until he commenced the study of the Bible with the determination to base his theological views on the decisions there recorded. By this course his opinions were changed. During the year of his rustication he read Swedenborg's Works, and followed them as he said, as far as he could in consistency with the Bible. When he was settled in the ministry, it was with the determination to keep free from religious controversy. But, being himself attacked, his whole course was changed, and he has acted a distinguished part in the theological polemics of the day.

His services to this community as a public man are so well known that we shall not now consider them in detail. We will

only give a list of the publications which came from his pen during his settlement.

1. An Article in the Christian Examiner on Holiness.
2. A Sermon on Denying the Lord.
3. A Sermon on Regeneration.
4. A Sermon on the Limited Influence of the Gospel.
5. A Sermon on the Means of increasing Public Happiness.
6. A Sermon at the Artillery Election.
7. A Sermon on Christian Salvation.
8. A Sermon on Christian Union.
9. A Lecture on Popular Superstition.
10. Letters on Revivals.
11. An Address at the Dedication of the Masonic Temple, Boston.
12. A volume of "Village Sermons."
13. Letters in the Controversy with Professor Stuart.
14. Letters to Universalists.

To these, had he lived, would have been added a volume of Letters to Unbelievers, some of which have appeared in "The Unitarian." He travelled in the West,—preached a dedication discourse at Cincinnati,—and visited also Louisville (Kentucky), and Richmond (Virginia). He travelled also in Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.—We cannot in brief space speak as we ought of the character of our deceased friend. He seems to us remarkably to have exemplified the power of decided moral purpose. In a notice of him published in the Christian Register since his death, it is said,—"He was remarkable for energy and perseverance,—a conviction of power,—a strong conception of the object of desire, followed by unwearied efforts to attain it,—zeal discouraged by no difficulties, but kindled and excited the more by them to vigorous exertion." Nor did this decided moral purpose of which we speak aim only at the accomplishment of outward objects. It acted most powerfully upon his own soul in transforming every constitutional quality into a Christian grace. We have said that naturally his mental temperament was marked by great boldness and ardour. We need not say how clearly his life has proved that these qualities became thoroughly Christianized in his mind. With a noble prudence he turned all his dispositions and powers to the account of virtue, and, if we may so speak, wrought the *substance* of his mind into the most glorious *forms*.

Mr. Whitman was in the best sense a practical man. He was practical, not in acting without thought, but in proving the energy of his thought by the energy of his life. The importance of the results proved the greatness of his plans. He did not allow his conceptions of the good that might be done to outrun his holy resolutions to effect it. When he had partially recovered from the first violent attack which preceded his gradual decline, we recollect asking him, if he would travel some miles from Waltham to address a body of young men on a subject in which their thoughts were engaged, and in which he was competent to instruct them,—and well do we remember the cheerful and earnest readiness with which he assented to the request,—the fulness of pleasure which shone in his face at the prospect of doing good. We need but a single stroke to delineate the character of the true Christian, and with that stroke the pencil of truth must touch the character of our deceased friend. *He was unwearied in the conception and execution of good resolutions.*

We will conclude this imperfect notice of our deceased brother with a few sentences from a notice which has already appeared. "During his long and lingering sickness all the characteristics of the true Christian shone forth with a brighter and clearer lustre. In this respect he showed an uncommon consistency of character. He manifested no raptures. He never did in health. He was equally free from despondency. He was uniformly calm, and cheerful, and grateful to the last. There was no sign of discontent, no moment of repining. He was accustomed to speak much of the good things with which he was surrounded, and of his unexpected freedom from great distress. His habitual language was that of calm, confiding, and grateful joy. And, as his family and friends gathered round him from time to time, they were astonished to see that the sick and dying man was the happiest of the group. He expressed his entire confidence to the last in the power of that simple faith which he had long cherished and laboured to promote. He thanked God for possessing it, and he prayed for its diffusion. His last words were those which were consecrated by the lips of the Saviour,—'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.'"